

In the Claims

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A combined battery comprising two end plates and a plurality of cells stacked adjacent each other and bound by the two end plates,
- wherein each of the cells [are] is provided with a battery container made of resin, [and]
- the plurality of cells are bound by the two end plates with a binding force equal to or lower than a threshold value determined based on a number and a compressibility of the cells and stiffness of the battery container, in such a manner that [no more than a predetermined amount of] irreversible deformation beyond an expansion limit of the battery container will not be caused [in] by expansion of the battery container during use, and
- the battery container is in a compressed state due to the binding force immediately after assembly of the combined battery.

2. (original) A combined battery according to claim 1, wherein the cell includes an electrode plate group containing positive electrode plates and negative electrode plates stacked adjacent each other with separators interposed therebetween, and
- the cells are stacked in a direction corresponding to a stacking direction of the electrode plate group.